

In July 2022, I attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Society of Symbiotes (ISS) and 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Holobionts in Lyon, France to present part of my PhD thesis project. This congress featured a diverse array of topics, including viral interactions in the holobiont, emerging tools to study symbiosis, and marine holobionts. The ISS conference was a perfect opportunity to display my current area of research, i.e. mechanisms of viral infection, while networking in a new field. I gave a poster presentation on using biotin-mediated proximity-based proteomics to identify host factors that interact with viral proteins during infection that support high titer viral replication. My results suggest that the Human Cytomegalovirus (HCMV) UL26 protein interacts with members of the JAK/STAT innate immune system pathway, suggesting a mechanism wherein UL26 manipulates the host innate immune system to support viral replication.

I have been actively searching for post-doctoral opportunities to study the underlying mechanisms of coral symbiosis. Corals of the phylum *Cnidaria*, establish